Policy on inter-State water sharing

4372. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Water policy silent on Inter-State sharing" which appeared in 'The Hindu' dated the 2nd April, 2002;

(b) if so, whether the revised policy is silent on inter-State water sharing which has been referred to the National Water Board;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken to implement the policy in consultation with all the State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The National Water Resources Council, while adopting the revised National Water Policy, 2002 in its 5th meeting held on 1st April, 2002, decided to refer the "National Policy Guidelines for Water Allocation amongst States" to the National Water Board for arriving at consensus on these guidelines. However, the National Water Policy, 2002 adopted by the National Water Resources Council has a provision in its para 21.1 regarding inter-State water sharing which envisages that "The water sharing/distribution amongst the States should be guided by a national perspective with due regard to water resources availability and needs within the river basin. Necessary guidelines, including for water short States even outside the basin, need to be evolved for facilitating future agreements amongst the basin States."

The policy, *inter-alia*, envisages that each State should formulate its own State Water-Policy backed with an operational action plan in a time-bound manner within a period of two years and implement the same in order to achieve the desired objectives as laid down in the Policy.